

Zalcitabine

zal-SITE-a-been

Brand Name: Hivid



Zalcitabine, also known as ddC or Hivid, is a type of antiretroviral drug called a nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NRTI). NRTIs block reverse transcriptase, a protein that HIV needs to make more copies of itself.

HIV/AIDS-Related Uses

Zalcitabine was approved by the FDA on June 19, 1992, for use in combination with other antiretroviral agents for the treatment of HIV infection in adult and pediatric patients. Zalcitabine is not currently recommended for patients taking antiretroviral drugs for the first time.

Zalcitabine does not cure or prevent HIV infection or AIDS and does not reduce the risk of passing the virus to other people.

Dosage Information

Zalcitabine comes in tablet form and may be taken with or without food.

Recommended Daily Dose

The recommended dose of zalcitabine is 0.750 mg every 8 hours. Patients with kidney disease may need to take a smaller dose of zalcitabine or take it less frequently. Patients should always take zalcitabine as prescribed by their doctor.

Zalcitabine is being studied to find out if it can be given only twice a day.

Contraindications

Individuals should tell a doctor about any medical problems before taking this medicine. Patients who have had pancreatitis or nerve pain in the past should take zalcitabine only when other drugs cannot be used. Patients taking pentamidine (often used to treat *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia) should not take zalcitabine.

Possible Side Effects

Along with its desired effects, zalcitabine may cause some unwanted effects, including severe inflammation of the pancreas and problems with nerves or the liver. Problems with the nerves, called peripheral neuropathy, cause burning,

numbness, or tingling in the hands, arms, feet, or legs. This usually starts within a few months of taking zalcitabine and can worsen over time. Nerve damage may become permanent if zalcitabine use continues.

Inflammation of the pancreas associated with zalcitabine may be fatal. Symptoms include stomach pain, nausea, and vomiting. Patients should tell their doctor right away if they have these symptoms.

Other side effects may not be serious and may lessen or disappear with continued use of the medicine. Less serious side effects of this medicine include headache, stomach upset, sores in the mouth or throat, skin rash, and tiredness.

Drug and Food Interactions

A doctor should be notified of any other medications being taken, including prescription, nonprescription (over-the-counter), or herbal medications.

Clinical Trials

For information on clinical trials that involve Zalcitabine, visit the ClinicalTrials.gov web site at <http://www.clinicaltrials.gov>. In the Search box, enter: Zalcitabine AND HIV Infections.

Manufacturer Information

Zalcitabine
Roche Laboratories
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(973) 235-5000

Hivid
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For More Information

Contact your doctor or an AIDSinfo Health Information Specialist:

- Via Phone: 1-800-448-0440 Monday - Friday, 12:00 p.m. (Noon) - 5:00 p.m. ET
- Via Live Help: http://aidsinfo.nih.gov/live_help Monday - Friday, 12:00 p.m. (Noon) - 4:00 p.m. ET